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Changing Your Child's Behavior – Focusing on the Solutions

Belinda H. Willis, Chief Division of Children's Services

As a parent, do you feel like you are constantly telling your child what NOT to do? "Don't spill that." "Stop running in the house." "Don't kick your brother." Do you feel like most of the time you are speaking with your child it is to correct him or her?

Changing your child's behavior is a challenge many parents face. Getting your child to change his/her OWN behavior makes your job easier (sometimes) and helps children to learn life-long problem solving skills.

Next time, try focusing on the child's strengths and competencies. Focus on what needs to happen – NOT what doesn't need to happen. Name the behavior or the outcome that you want to see and give your attention to your child when you see him/her exhibiting that behavior. "I like the way you walked down the hall." "It's great when you read to your brother." This may require a little extra effort on your part in the beginning, but down the road, the dividends will be apparent. Your child will learn important skills as well as come to know that he/she can solve his/her own problems.

Think about it: By focusing on the solutions and your child's competencies (the skills that your child has already acquired), you are teaching your child some very important lessons about problem solving, as well as increasing the opportunities for positive interactions between you.

- Rename the behavioral goal into something positive – (the ability TO DO something, NOT the ability NOT TO DO something). Instead of "Don't write on the walls," try "Write on your paper." It also helps if there are some benefits to the child for learning this skill. (Eg., He/she gets to keep the crayons or gets to spend extra time with mom or dad.)
- Find what doesn't work and do something different - Is your child more apt to write on the walls when he/she is sitting close to them?
- Find what works and do more of it - Does it help when you are in the same room as your child?
- Build on successes – Make opportunities for your child to succeed so he/she can practice the new skill.
- Celebrate with your child once he/she has mastered the skill – Do something special with/for your child to let them know how proud you are of them for their accomplishment.



Volunteer Opportunities:

York County Children's Services needs your time, talent, and support!

Volunteers are essential to the success of **Head Start**. The participation of our volunteers has been an effective way to mobilize community resources, as well as to strengthen Head Start services. Special opportunities for college interns are available; please contact us to discuss your individual curriculum needs. Help brighten the life of a **Head Start** child. To become a **Head Start** Volunteer contact us at (757) 890-3888.

How Effective is the Head Start Program?

Each year, children in the York County Head Start program are assessed to see if there are any improvements in their skill level. This is an effective way for the program to assess it's own effectiveness.

Children are individually assessed three times during the program year in an unobtrusive manner, with the teachers observing the children as they play and during their conversations. Parents are asked about their child's progress and are asked to assist in completing the checklists.

The domains that are assessed are Math, Science, Literacy, Language and Communication, Social and Emotional, Approaches to Learning, Physical, and Creative Expression.

How did we do? These are the outcomes for program year 2002 – 2003:

On average, the children who will be attending kindergarten in the Fall, started Head Start in 2002 knowing only 11.42 letters of the alphabet. By May, 2003, they were able to recognize 18.2 letters. Twenty-one children (46%) could recognize all 26 letters of the alphabet.



<u>Domain</u>	<u>Results</u>	<u>Threes</u>	<u>Fours</u>
Math	First	18.80	29.95
	Last	25.85	36.34
	% Increase	24%	16%
Science	First	7.84	15.32
	Last	10.81	19.39
	% Increase	25%	19%
Literacy	First	16.68	30.19
	Last	23.92	37.88
	% Increase	24%	18%
Language & Communication	First	13.83	15.41
	Last	16.71	17.14
	% Increase	16%	10%
Social/Emotional	First	20.91	26.57
	Last	27.73	31.33
	% Increase	23%	14%
Approaches to Learning	First	10.87	15.49
	Last	14.00	17.37
	% Increase	21%	10%
Physical	First	20.34	24.32
	Last	25.88	26.52
	% Increase	21%	8%
Creative Expression	First	10.28	15.31
	Last	14.12	17.46
	% Increase	26%	12%
Total Score	First	119.55	173.04
	Last	159.47	203.36
	% Increase	23%	14%

Call for Sponsors/Donations
**11th Annual Queen's Lake Run
 for Children**
April 3, 2004
 at New Quarter Park



Proceeds benefit early childhood programs in York County.
 For more information, please contact Belinda Willis at
 willisb@yorkcounty.gov

This space is for rent. Businesses interested in this ad space, please
 contact Belinda H. Willis at (757) 890-3888 or willisb@yorkcounty.gov

WHY HANDS ON?

I tried to teach my child with books,
 He only gave me troubled looks.

I tried to teach my child with words,
 They passed him by ... often unheard.

Despairingly, I turned aside...
 "How will I teach this child," I cried?

Into my hand, he put the key...
 "COME," he said, "Play with me!"

Author: Unknown

Support Head Start with your Food Lion Purchases

Each time you shop at Food Lion and use your MVP card, a portion of your total grocery purchase will be donated to Head Start.

Here's how:

- Go to www.foodlion.com on the Internet
- In the listing at the left of the screen, click "Fundraising."
- In the middle of the next screen, click on "Link MVP Card to Not-For-Profit Organization"
- On the next screen enter your twelve digit MVP number (this includes the smaller numbers to the right and left of the centered numbers) and enter the first 3 letters of your last name. Click "Go."
- On the next screen, your MVP number will appear. Enter additional requested information. The click "Select Organization" and three drop down boxes will appear. In "Select State," select "VA." In "Select City," select "Williamsburg: (Do not select any other city). In "Select Organization," select "York County Children's Services." Then click "Next."
- In the next screen, all the information you have entered should appear. If all of the information is correct, click "Finished." If not, click "Edit" and edit accordingly and then click "Finished."



Please ask your friends and co-workers to sign up too!

THE HUMAN RACE

Walk to raise \$ for York County Head Start

November 25, 2003

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Newport News Park

"Celebration in Lights"



The Human Race is an event organized by The Volunteer Center that involves more than 500 agencies and 1200 volunteers raising funds for local community programs. The race also allows participants to experience the "Celebration in Lights" for a reduced cost before it's opening to the public. This year, Head Start would like to welcome you to join our team. Please contact us at 890-3888 if you would like to walk or make a pledge.

Call for Sponsors

Children's Services is beginning to work on the **11th Annual New Quarter Park 5K**, a race that benefits programs operated by Children's Services. This race will be held on April 3, 2004.

All contributors will be mentioned as sponsors in a prominent display on Race Day. Contributors at the \$100 level and above will be printed on the race day t-shirts. And, all donations are tax deductible.

Call (757) 890-3888 or send an e-mail to willisb@yorkcounty.gov to add your name to the list of sponsors.



Gold Shoe Sponsors

\$100 and above

Silver Shoe Sponsors

\$50 - \$99.



Children's Services Hotline

Have a question concerning resources for children?

Want to check out parenting tips? Children's Services

Head Start Hotline offers recorded parenting tips and also allows callers to leave questions to which staff will respond. Each month there is a new recording available for parents everywhere to obtain information regarding education, health, and family. Try it today!

Call (757) 890-3222

10th Annual New Quarter Park 5K Thanks Our 2003 Sponsors

The **Division of Children's Services** would like to express our sincere appreciation to the participants, volunteers and staff for their endeavors in the **10th Annual New Quarter Park 5K!** Funds raised for this event went to support the Head Start program in York County. The Head Start program services 117 children. **Thank you for your support!**



York County Children's Services
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Williamsburg, VA 23185

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Sunny Day Guide
VA Living Museum
VA Marine Science Museum*



For additional information on programs, services, and special events call the York County Head Start Daily Press 1-Line,

(757) 928-1111, ext. 5383.